

## Message Text

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ACTION OES-07

INFO OCT-01 EA-12 ISO-00 AID-05 CEQ-01 CIAE-00 SOE-02  
COME-00 DODE-00 EB-08 EPA-04 INR-10 IO-14 L-03  
NSF-02 NSC-05 NSAE-00 PM-05 USIA-15 SS-15 SP-02  
DOE-15 INT-05 PA-02 /133 W  
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R 270632Z MAR 78  
FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6464

UNCLAS TOKYO 04885

FOR OES/ENP/EN

DEPT. PASS TO EPA

E.O. 11652: N/A  
TAGS: SENV, JA  
SUBJECT: RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN AREA OF ENVIRONMENTAL  
PROTECTION

1. TWO MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS HAVE RECEIVED ATTENTION IN THE  
JAPANESE PRESS: PROPOSED RELAXATION OF AMBIENT AIR QUALITY  
STANDARDS FOR NITROGEN DIOXIDE AND GOJ APPROVAL OF  
PREFECTURAL POLLUTION CONTROL PROJECTS TO BE UNDERTAKEN  
IN THE NEXT FIVE YEARS.

2. ON MARCH 20, AN EXPERTS PANEL OF CENTRAL COUNCIL FOR  
CONTROL OF ENVIRONMENTAL POLLUTION SUBMITTED A REPORT  
RECOMMENDING RELAXATION OF THE 1973 ENVIRONMENTAL STAND-  
ARDS FOR NITROGEN DIOXIDE, REVISING THE STANDARD VALUE OF  
0.02 PPM ON DAILY AVERAGE OF HOURLY VALUES TO 0.02-0.03  
PPM ON YEARLY AVERAGE AND 0.1-0.2 PPM ON HOURLY BASIS.  
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THE NEW FIGURES MEAN A 50 PER CENT RELAXATION OF THE  
CURRENT STANDARDS. BASED ON THE RECOMMENDATION, ENVIRON-  
MENT AGENCY IS EXPECTED TO OFFICIALLY REVISE THE  
STANDARDS FOR NITROGEN DIOXIDE BY END OF MAY. EVEN THE  
RELAXED STANDARDS HAVE MET WITH OBJECTIONS FROM INDUSTRY  
ESPECIALLY IRON AND STEEL AND ELECTRIC POWER. THEY POINT  
OUT THAT ALTHOUGH THE RECOMMENDED STANDARDS REPRESENT 50

PER CENT RELAXATION, THEY STILL ARE MUCH MORE SEVERE THAN THOSE ADOPTED BY WESTERN COUNTRIES WHICH IN MOST CASES ARE SET AT 0.1 PPM ON DAILY AVERAGE. ATTAINMENT OF THE NEW STANDARDS WILL BE QTE EXTREMELY DIFFICULT BOTH TECHNOLOGICALLY AND ECONOMICALLY UNQTE (JAPAN IRON AND STEEL INDUSTRY FEDERATION). FEDERATION OFFICIALS ALSO SAID JAPANESE STANDARDS (FOR NITROGEN DIOXIDE) HAVE BEEN CRITICIZED AS TOO STRINGENT BY WESTERN COUNTRIES.

3. THE RESEARCH INSTITUTE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION OF TOKYO METROPOLITAN GOVERNMENT, HOWEVER, IS OPPOSED TO ANY RELAXATION OF STANDARDS. INSTITUTE HAS CONCLUDED THROUGH TESTS OF PHOTOCHEMICAL SMOG THAT MAINTAINING THE 1973 STANDARDS IS ESSENTIAL FOR MINIMIZING GENERATION OF PHOTOCHEMICAL SMOG. INSTITUTE POINTED OUT THAT A SERIES OF TESTS CONCLUDED LAST YEAR HAVE MADE IT CLEAR THAT PHOTOCHEMICAL REACTION WAS CAUSED IN AIR WHOSE NOX CONCENTRATION WAS BELOW THE CURRENT STANDARD.

4. GOJ ON MARCH 17 APPROVED POLLUTION CONTROL PROGRAMS FOR TOKYO AND 10 OTHER AREAS FOR THE NEXT FIVE YEARS. ESTIMATED COST OF PROGRAMS IS ABOUT YEN 8.84 TRILLION (DOLS 38.4 BILLION) WHICH IS TO BE BORNE MOSTLY BY LOCAL PUBLIC BODIES (PREFECTURES). UNDER THE PROGRAM, CONCENTRATION OF NITROGEN OXIDES IN AMBIENT AIR WILL HAVE TO BE REDUCED BY 69 PER CENT AND AMOUNT OF POLLUTANTS IN UNCLASSIFIED

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RIVERS, LAKES AND SEA WATER BY 45 PER CENT FROM PRESENT LEVELS BY END OF FISCAL YEAR 1981 IN ALL OF THE 11 AREAS, WHICH INCLUDE TOKYO, KANAGAWA, SAITAMA, NAGOYA AND ITS SURROUNDING AREAS, KYOTO ALONG YODO RIVER, OSAKA, EASTERN HYOGO PREFECTURE, KITAKYUSHU IN FUKUOKA PREF., KASHIMA IN IBARAKI PREF. AND OITA. QUALITY OF AIR AND WATER, NOISE, VIBRATION CAUSED BY CONSTRUCTION WORK AND LAND TRANSPORT VEHICLES, OFFENSIVE ODOR AND LAND SUBSIDENCE WILL BE STRICTLY CONTROLLED FOR COMPREHENSIVE IMPROVEMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT IN ALL THE DESIGNATED AREAS.

5. COMMENT: NOTWITHSTANDING PROPOSED RELAXATION IN NITROGEN OXIDE STANDARDS--WHICH WILL ALMOST CERTAINLY COME ABOUT, AND WHICH DOES NOT TRULY REPRESENT A CHANGE IN DIRECTION OF JAPANESE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION PROGRAM, JAPAN CONTINUES TO BE DEDICATED TO MAKING MASSIVE IMPROVEMENTS IN ITS ENVIRONMENT. SUCH EFFORTS SHOULD FIT IN WELL WITH GOJ COMMITMENTS TO EXPAND INTERNAL ECONOMIC GROWTH. MANSFIELD

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## Message Attributes

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**Decaption Date:** 01 jan 1960  
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